

# Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

## Draft Management Plan: A Summary Guide

May - July, 2006

### Sanctuary's New Draft Management Plan Available For Public Comment

The National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) is currently updating the management plan for the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary. To help you understand the sanctuary's new management plan and your opportunity to help shape it, this summary provides brief descriptions of proposed sanctuary *action plans* and proposed revised sanctuary regulations, along with information on how to make your voice heard. This is your chance to comment on the future of your sanctuary, and the NMSP welcomes your input.



Photo: Thomas Carey

### Help Shape the Future of Your Sanctuary!

*We welcome your comments and suggestions on the Draft Management Plan. Here's how:*

#### Public Hearings:

Tuesday, June 27, 2006, 6:15-9:00 pm  
Sheraton Four Points Hotel  
San Buenaventura Ballroom  
1050 Schooner Drive  
Ventura, California

Thursday, June 29, 2006, 6:15-9:00 pm  
Earl Warren Showgrounds  
Warren Hall  
3400 Calle Real Street  
Santa Barbara, California

**Email:** [cinms.mgtplan@noaa.gov](mailto:cinms.mgtplan@noaa.gov)

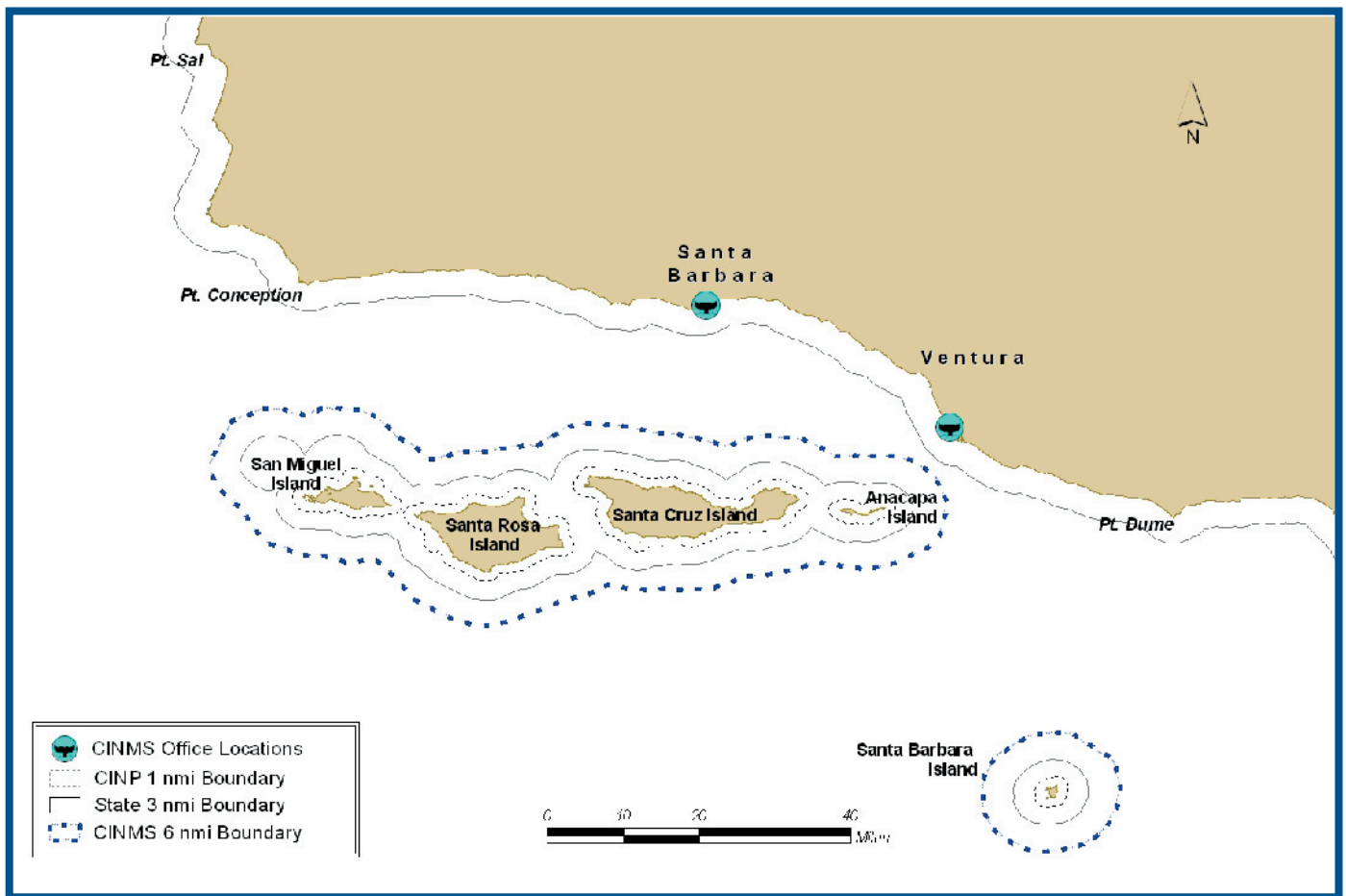
**Mail:** Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary  
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Santa Barbara, California 93109

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***Comments accepted through  
(postmarked by) July 21, 2006.***

**For information on how to get a copy of the Draft Management Plan please refer to the back cover of this guide.**





## About the Sanctuary

Designated in 1980, the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary consists of an area off the coast of California of approximately 1,243 square nautical miles (nm) adjacent to the following islands and offshore rocks: San Miguel Island, Santa Cruz Island, Santa Rosa Island, Anacapa Island, Santa Barbara Island, Richardson Rock, and Castle Rock extending seaward to a distance of approximately six nm. The islands and rocks vary in distance from 12 to 40 nm offshore from Santa Barbara and Ventura counties in southern California.

A fertile combination of warm and cool currents in this area results in a great variety of plants and animals including kelp forests, fish and invertebrates, pinnipeds, cetaceans and sea birds. The sanctuary also has a wealth of maritime heritage resources including Chumash Native American artifacts and more than 100 historic shipwrecks. Human uses in the area include commercial and recreational fishing, marine wildlife viewing, boating, diving, kayaking, maritime shipping, nearby offshore oil and gas development, research and monitoring, military and numerous educational activities.

## Sanctuary Goals

The sanctuary's goals, derived from the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, are to:

- 1) Protect the natural habitats, ecological systems and biological communities of all living resources inhabiting the sanctuary, and the area's cultural and archaeological resources, for future generations;
- 2) Enhance public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the marine environment and the natural, historical, cultural and archaeological resources of the sanctuary;
- 3) Where appropriate, restore and enhance natural habitats, populations and ecological systems;
- 4) Provide comprehensive and coordinated conservation and management of the sanctuary, as well as the activities affecting it, in a manner complementing existing regulatory authorities;
- 5) Create models and incentives for ways to conserve and manage the sanctuary, including the application of innovative management techniques;
- 6) Allow to the extent compatible with the primary objective of resource protection, public and private uses of the resources; and
- 7) Cooperate with national and international programs encouraging conservation of marine resources.





actions proposed to address them, and performance measures. It is supported by a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which contains detailed information on the greater sanctuary region, presents a range of alternatives for modified and new sanctuary regulations, and provides environmental and socioeconomic impact analyses of those regulatory alternatives. These two documents are bundled together in two volumes: the Draft Management Plan is Volume I, and the DEIS is Volume II. Based on comments received during the public comment period on these drafts, the NMSP will develop the sanctuary's Final Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement.

## The National Marine Sanctuary Program & Public Participation

National marine sanctuaries are areas of the marine environment with special conservation, recreational, ecological, historical, cultural, archaeological, or esthetic qualities. The NMSP has managed these special areas since passage of Title III of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972; now called the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. For more than 30 years the NMSP has engaged the public in helping to create new sanctuaries, develop resource protection strategies, address complex resource management issues, and – more recently – to review and update sanctuary management plans.

### What is the Draft Management Plan?

The management plan is a road map for sanctuary management that serves to: 1) guide site management toward achievement of the sanctuary's goals using the best means available; and 2) inform sanctuary constituents, including the general public, about the sanctuary, its regulations, and the management actions it has planned for the next five years. The sanctuary's new Draft Management Plan, released in May 2006, represents a major revision of the original 1983 management plan under which the sanctuary currently operates.

The new Draft Management Plan contains information about the sanctuary's environment and resources, staffing and administration, regulations and boundaries, priority management issues and the

### Why is the Sanctuary's Management Plan Being Reviewed?

The NMSP is required to review sanctuary management plans to:

- Evaluate substantive progress toward implementing the management plan and goals;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of site-specific management techniques and strategies;
- Determine necessary revisions to the management plan and regulations;
- Prioritize management objectives; and
- Meet requirements of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act.

Since the sanctuary's 1980 designation, significant innovations in science, technology, and marine resource management techniques have been made, while challenging new resource management issues have emerged. In addition to updating its now obsolete 1983 management plan, the plan revision process provides a vehicle for the NMSP to integrate new tools and practices into site management





## How Was The Draft Management Plan Developed?

The management plan review process is based on three fundamental steps: 1) public scoping meetings (“scoping” is a process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed by, and identifying the significant issues related to, a federal agency’s proposed action) ; 2) the prioritization of issues and development of action plans; and 3) the preparation of draft and final management plans and regulations, and the relevant environmental documentation (such as an Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment) as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Formal public hearings and public comments on the draft plan help staff revise the document into a final management plan, which, once approved, outlines the sanctuary’s priorities for the next five to ten years.

Seven public scoping meetings were held in 1999 from San Luis Obispo in central California, to Long Beach in southern California (one meeting was also held in Washington, D.C.). During scoping, sanctuary constituents raised a wide range of local, regional and national resource management issues, such as sanctuary boundaries, water quality, marine reserves, and enforcement.

Sanctuary staff worked with the Sanctuary Advisory Council to analyze and refine all of the issue categories raised during scoping. Based on input from the Advisory Council and general public, sanctuary, NMSP and other NOAA staff collaborated to develop a robust set of action plans and proposed revised sanctuary regulations to address issues and concerns identified during scoping. The sanctuary staff also consulted with Congressional leaders and federal, state and local government agencies regarding the new Draft Management Plan. The NMSP contracted Tetra Tech, Inc. for assistance in developing the DEIS, which contains an analysis of its proposed regulation changes.

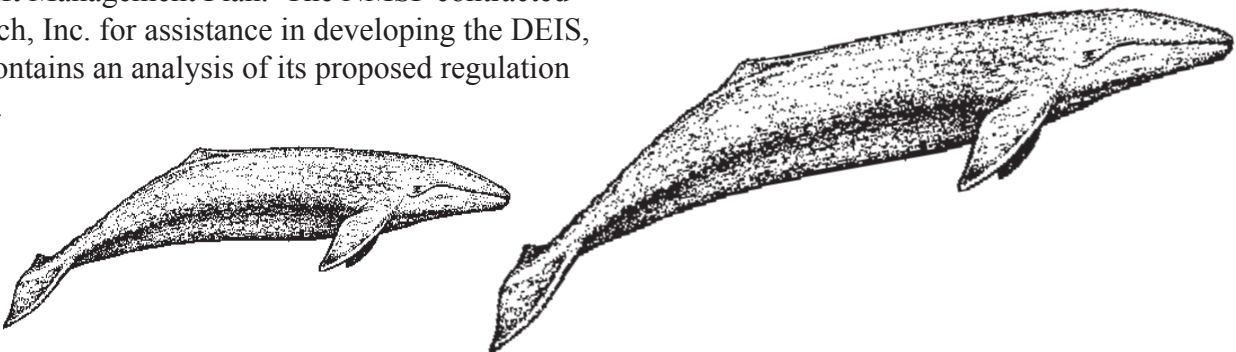
## The Sanctuary, Partnerships, and the Sanctuary Advisory Council

Partnerships are vitally important to sanctuary operations. The sanctuary works with local, state, and federal agencies in addition to regional and local stakeholders, research institutions, and other non-governmental organizations in order to carry out the NMSP’s mission. The sanctuary relies on its many partners to leverage resources available to implement various resource protection, research, and education programs. It will continue to rely on these partnerships to implement the new management plan.

One of the sanctuary’s strongest partners is the Sanctuary Advisory Council. Dedicated Sanctuary Advisory Council members have laid a strong foundation for the sanctuary’s structures, policies, and procedures. The Advisory Council provides the sanctuary superintendent with advice on management priorities, programs and activities.

The Sanctuary Advisory Council has proven to be a powerful voice for the general public, responding to citizen concerns, ideas, and needs. It provides a public forum for its constituents, working to improve communications and bringing the concerns of stakeholders to the attention of the Sanctuary Superintendent and NOAA leadership in Washington, D.C.

Constituents are encouraged to communicate with their Sanctuary Advisory Council representatives and to attend Sanctuary Advisory Council meetings as a means of raising or commenting on various sanctuary-related issues. Information about the Sanctuary Advisory Council is provided on the sanctuary’s web site at [www.channelislands.noaa.gov](http://www.channelislands.noaa.gov) (click on “Sanctuary Advisory Council”).





## Summary of Draft Action Plans and Proposed Regulations

The Draft Management Plan contains ten action plans that, as proposed, will guide sanctuary management in the years ahead, and a number of regulatory changes are proposed to improve resource protection.

### *Public Awareness and Understanding*

The primary objective of the Public Awareness and Understanding Action Plan is to promote an understanding of the unique natural and maritime heritage resources of the sanctuary. Through community and regional partnerships in education, the sanctuary has and will continue to reach out to a broad spectrum of the public, exposing them to not only the biological, physical, and intrinsic values of the sanctuary, but also the impacts human activity can have on this invaluable resource. This outreach can help the public develop a personal sense of ownership and responsibility for the sanctuary, the key to building stewardship. This action plan describes activities such as visitor center support and development, multi-cultural education, and the Channel Islands Naturalist Corps program.

### *Conservation Science*

The NMSP has adopted the mission-oriented, multi-disciplinary approach of conservation science for the protection, assessment, monitoring, maintenance, and restoration of the historical and natural resources under its stewardship. The Conservation Science Action Plan describes the sanctuary's efforts to develop a research and monitoring program for evaluating ecosystem health, socioeconomic impacts, and implementing effective resource management strategies. The sanctuary and its partners work to obtain sufficient data on living marine resources, ecosystems and human activities to better understand questions and issues such as how biological communities function and vary naturally; how different biological components interact and are integral to the ecosystem health; effects of human activities on the natural system; how ecosystems vary over time due to natural perturbations and human-related factors; and socioeconomic impacts resulting from the health of the ecosystem or from management actions. Strategies in this action plan include a focus on aerial monitoring, collaborative research and marine reserves monitoring.

### *Boundary Evaluation*

*NOTE: sanctuary boundary expansion is not proposed in this plan. A separate public process will address this issue in the future.*

Many people raised the issue of sanctuary boundary expansion during public scoping in 1999 and throughout 2000. The Boundary Evaluation Action Plan describes a future process the NMSP will utilize to evaluate possible changes to the sanctuary's boundary.

### *Performance Evaluation*

As part of an effort to improve overall management of national marine sanctuaries, ongoing and routine performance evaluation is a priority for the NMSP. The Performance Evaluation Action Plan presents a series of performance measures for the sanctuary's other nine action plans. The sanctuary will use these performance measures to demonstrate progress towards achieving its objectives (provided within the strategies of each action plan).

### *Marine Zoning*

*NOTE: Marine reserves are not proposed in this plan. The NMSP is addressing this issue through a separate public process, with a DEIS to be released in 2006.*

The Marine Zoning Action Plan describes marine zoning as a potential tool for resource protection, and enhanced public use and enjoyment of the sanctuary. Zones implemented by various authorities have been in place in the sanctuary since 1980 (e.g., large vessel exclusion zones near island shores and overflight zones to limit wildlife disturbance). Strategies in this action plan focus on evaluating spatial data to determine the utility of zoning within the sanctuary, and provide an overview of the separate environmental review process the sanctuary is engaged in to consider establishing marine reserves and conservation areas within its boundaries.

### *Water Quality*

The Water Quality Action Plan describes strategies for understanding and addressing potential water quality threats. Traditionally, the sanctuary's water quality efforts have been primarily limited to: supporting select monitoring projects conducted by outside parties, facilitating public discussion and investigation of water quality issues, producing various water quality education and outreach materials, and promoting practices to limit pollution. This action plan addresses the need for the sanctuary to work in partnership with other entities to find answers to important water quality questions. Such questions concern topics ranging from water quality science to management policies and regulations.

### *Emergency Response and Enforcement*

Effectively responding to emergencies (e.g., oil spills) and ensuring compliance with sanctuary regulations requires coordination of multiple agencies, vessel and aircraft operations, and trained officers, staff, and volunteers. The Emergency Response and Enforcement Action Plan presents strategies and actions for addressing the sanctuary's emergency response and enforcement needs. Strategies within this action plan focus on emergency response preparedness and planning, interpretive enforcement, vessel and aircraft surveillance, and inter-agency cooperative enforcement.

### *Maritime Heritage Resources*

The Maritime Heritage Resources action plan focuses on the sanctuary's archaeological research and monitoring, maritime heritage resource protection, and education and outreach about our rich maritime history and important connections to the contemporary Chumash Native American culture. Collectively, sanctuary maritime heritage resources represent a remarkable cross-section of our regional and national heritage. Cultural material in the sanctuary dates as far back as 13,000 years while historic materials span history from Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo's European voyage of discovery (1542 to 1543) up to the mid 20th century. Activities in this action plan include monitoring and inventorying maritime heritage resources sites, developing exhibits and outreach materials, upgrading the sanctuary's maritime heritage resource web site, and working with members of the Chumash Native American community to provide education and outreach about Chumash heritage.

### *Emerging Issues*

The Emerging Issues Action Plan presents a framework for identifying and addressing future sanctuary resource protection issues. Utilizing an ecosystem-based approach to resource management, sanctuary staff examine and evaluate resource protection issues that may emerge within or adjacent to the sanctuary (e.g., acoustics, introduced species, marine bioprospecting). This approach requires that sanctuary staff accurately identify, research, monitor, and assess the significance of new issues and potential threats. Doing so enables sanctuary staff to take appropriate actions to reduce potential negative impacts on sanctuary resources and qualities, and maintain the public's appropriate use and enjoyment of the sanctuary.



Photo: Robert V. Schwemmer



## Operations

The Operations Action Plan describes the sanctuary's day-to-day administrative and operational activities. These activities are designed to safely and effectively utilize the sanctuary's administrative, infrastructure, fiscal, and human resources. Since the sanctuary is one of many entities involved in the management of resources within the Channel Islands and surrounding waters, partnerships and community involvement programs aid in achieving comprehensive and coordinated management of sanctuary resources.

## Sanctuary Regulations

The current sanctuary regulations have been in place since 1980. NOAA is proposing changing sanctuary regulations in order to: clarify and update existing vague and/or outdated sanctuary regulations; increase consistency with other national marine sanctuaries' regulations (especially the other three national marine sanctuaries in California); address priority resource issues; and address new, emerging, and other potential threats to sanctuary resources.

The DEIS (Volume II of the Draft Management Plan) provides a description and analysis of sanctuary regulatory changes under consideration. There are three regulatory alternatives analyzed in the DEIS: status quo, proposed action, and alternative one (slightly more stringent than the proposed action). In general, the three regulatory alternatives address activities listed in the table at right. For details about the regulatory alternatives please refer to the DEIS.



Photo: Robert V. Schwemmer

## Overview of Regulated Activities Across the Three DEIS Alternatives

Regulated Activities	Alternatives*	Pages in DEIS Sec. 2	Pages in DEIS Sec. 4
<b>Activities Currently Regulated</b>			
Oil and gas exploration, production, and development	SQ, PA, A1	2-3 2-26	4-6 4-26
Discharges and deposits of matter (including, but not limited to, discharges from marine sanitation devices and food waste)	SQ, PA, A1	2-5 2-24 2-26	4-7 4-24 4-27
Altering the sanctuary's seabed/submerged lands	SQ, PA, A1	2-7 2-27	4-11 4-28
Operating large vessels within 1 nautical mile of islands and certain offshore rocks within the sanctuary	SQ, PA, A1	2-10 2-25 2-28	4-13 4-24 4-28
Disturbing marine mammals or seabirds by low flying aircraft	SQ, PA, A1	2-11 2-29	4-15 4-29
Moving, removing, injuring or possessing sanctuary cultural resources	SQ, PA, A1	2-11 2-29	4-15 4-29
<b>Activities Proposed to be Regulated</b>			
Mineral exploration, production, and development	PA, A1	2-4 2-26	4-6 4-26
Abandoning material or other matter on in or sanctuary submerged lands	PA, A1	2-9 2-28	4-13 4-28
Taking or possessing marine mammals, seabirds, and sea turtles	PA, A1	2-12 2-13 2-29	4-16 4-17 4-29
Tampering with sanctuary signs	PA, A1	2-14 2-30	4-18 4-30
Releasing introduced species	PA, A1	2-14 2-30	4-18 4-30
Operating motorized personal watercraft (within the area already banned by National Park Service)	PA, A1	2-16 2-30	4-20 4-31
Lightering (at-sea transfer of petroleum-based products, materials, or other matter from vessel to vessel)	A1	2-25	4-25
<b>* SQ = Status Quo; PA = Proposed Action; A1 = Alternative One</b>			

Publication produced in May 2006 by:  
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## Visit our web site:

[www.channelislands.noaa.gov](http://www.channelislands.noaa.gov)

## To get a copy of the Draft Management Plan:

1. Go to [www.channelislands.noaa.gov](http://www.channelislands.noaa.gov)

2. Visit a sanctuary office:

113 Harbor Way, Santa Barbara Harbor (in Santa Barbara) or  
3600 S. Harbor Blvd. Ste. 111, Channel Islands Harbor (in Ventura County)

3. Visit the Ventura County or Santa Barbara public library

4. Contact us via email ([mp.request@noaa.gov](mailto:mp.request@noaa.gov)) or phone (805.884.1464)  
& provide us with the following information:

*Full name, title & affiliation (if applicable),  
complete mailing address  
& indicate whether you would like a  
hard copy or a CD-ROM.*

*Comments accepted through  
(postmarked by) July 21, 2006.*

Photo: Sarah MacWilliams